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# THE MONTH

DECEMBER 1955

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## COMMENT

THE CONTEMPORARY CRISIS in the Middle East, brought so forcefully to the foreground by deadlock over Cyprus (where British intransigence has facilitated Communist exploitation of *Enosis*), and by the sale of Czech armaments to Egypt, not only indicates the hypocrisy of the Kremlin's widely advertised concern for the relief of international tension; it serves also to expose Soviet interests and aspirations in the Mediterranean, and shows how adept is the Soviet Foreign Office in effecting a synthesis of Bolshevik methods—internal subversion, infiltration and class-war, anti-colonial propaganda—and the traditional expansionist techniques of the *ancien régime*.

There is no doubt whatever that present Soviet policies are in part inspired by the traditional imperialist ambitions of the Czars. To observe the continuity it is necessary only to recall the sequence of events since the time of Peter the Great. The dismemberment of Persia (1726) was followed by Catherine the Great's defeat of Turkey and the conquest of the Crimea (1783). The Russian wars with Turkey and Persia during the first half of the nineteenth century culminated in the Crimean War (1853-56), and in the Russo-Turkish War (1877-78), which, but for the intervention of Bismarck and Disraeli at the Congress of Berlin, would have established Russian mastery over the Balkans. And although the First World War and the October Revolution appeared to make an end of the empire of the Czars, yet as early as 1920 the new régime had renewed the challenge with the *Congress of the Peoples of the East*, whose purpose was to subvert and inflame all underdeveloped areas, but particularly the region of the Near and Middle East. If in the inter-war period Russia appeared to be satisfied with the privileges granted her by the Montreux Convention, which left the control of the Straits firmly in Turkish hands, this implied, not the abandonment of Mediterranean expansionist ambitions, but simply their postponement until such time as international relations proved more favourable.

The awaited opportunity for a resumption of the offensive in the Near and Middle East came with the Second World War. Henceforth a chain of Soviet diplomatic and propaganda agencies

was established throughout this area. If the partial Soviet occupation of Persia was to prove only temporary, the U.S.S.R. by adding a string of Balkan satellites to her empire was able to advance considerably her imperialist designs towards the Mediterranean. It is true that Western intervention in Greece and Tito's unforeseen apostasy denied her the status of a Mediterranean power. Nevertheless, Khrushchev's anxiety to placate Tito and his interest in *Enosis* have as their ultimate objective no mere reunification of doctrinaire Marxists, nor yet the embarrassment of Whitehall—these are but means, not ends—but the firm establishment of the Soviet power on the shores of the Mediterranean. In the same way, Soviet intrigue in Egypt is designed not just to exclude Great Britain from Suez, but chiefly to make impossible effective resistance to Russia's expansion towards the Mediterranean: and as the present crisis in French North Africa has already created the possibility of pan-Arab opposition to the West, it should be at once obvious that anything which serves to drive a wedge between the Arab world and the West cannot fail to bring welcome grist to the Soviet mill.

It is of course ridiculous that France should be judged for her conduct in North Africa by the United Nations. M. George Yeh, Foreign Minister of the Republic of China, pointed out in his statement at the Tenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 28 September 1955: "Though as a result of studies made by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Forced Labour, proof of forced labour in the Soviet Union and its satellites and on the Chinese mainland was established, the United Nations is yet unable to see its way to condemn such practice." If therefore the United Nations were to pass judgment on France, whose sins in North Africa, however serious, are venial in the extreme by comparison with the crimes for which the U.S.S.R. is responsible, there could be no more absurd caricature of justice.

Nevertheless, French policy in North Africa cannot be written off as a private affair of interest only to France. In view of the Kremlin's readiness to exploit Arab grievances, the N.A.T.O. powers have the right and the duty both to help and to advise France so that an equitable settlement of her differences with Arab nationalists may be devised. But before proceeding to remove the mote from the French eye, Britain and America

would be well advised first to remove the beam from their own by doing something to remedy the grievous injustices suffered by the Arabs in Palestine as a result of Western connivance at Zionist aggression there. Indeed nothing has done more to alienate Western influence from the Arab world than the sufferings of the Palestine Arab refugees who were so callously uprooted from the land to which they have inalienable rights.

The Arab population which has occupied the country for the last 1,300 years [wrote the late Canon Arendzen in 1936], has definite and inalienable rights which must be respected. The Jews are foreigners in Palestine and the intrusion of vast numbers of foreigners, so as to swamp the native population, seems an act of unprovoked injustice. It would be unjust if some great power by force made England a national home for the Danes on the strength of that people once having been masters of this country (England) 1,000 years ago. The Jews have practically evacuated Palestine since A.D. 138 and their intrusion into it, after having left it for eighteen hundred years, seems unjustifiable on any known principles of equity.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, with the permission of Washington and Westminster, Zionists deprived countless thousands of the native Arab population of their homes and forced them into the desert at the points of Israeli bayonets. Their misery was eloquently described by Cardinal Spellman when he visited Arab refugee camps near Beirut, Lebanon, in January 1953. "Of all the camps I visited in China and other parts of the world," said Cardinal Spellman, "I saw none in the same plight as those of the Palestine Arab refugees." Asked whether Americans had any idea concerning the conditions of the 850,000 refugees whom he had described as "suffering in cold, muddy, rainy darkness," he asserted: "It is impossible for anyone to have a correct idea without seeing it."<sup>2</sup>

It is perhaps only to be expected that post-Christians should be indifferent to human suffering so far removed from their doorstep. Even so, it is impossible not to remark on the silence of a press usually so eager to traffic in sensationalism in any shape or form. But there is no excuse whatsoever for Christian indifference, since Zionist terrorism has been directed against Christian no less than against Arab. It is necessary only to remember the desecration of the Christian churches and the complete absence

<sup>1</sup> *Catholic Gazette*, August 1936.

<sup>2</sup> *Brooklyn Tablet*, 17 January 1953.

of respect for the Christian faith, to realise how disquieting it is that most of the Catholic press in this country (which for some time this year carried Israeli advertisements urging readers to take holidays in Palestine) has devoted so little space to events in the Holy Land. It is therefore both relevant and necessary to outline briefly some of the recent developments:

In 1947, the United Nations sent to Palestine a Special Committee which issued two reports, differing on some points but agreeing that "the safeguarding of the Holy Places, buildings and sites located in Palestine should be a condition to the granting of independence, since Palestine as a Holy Land occupies a unique position in the world." Later, on 29 November 1947, the United Nations adopted a resolution declaring that the city of Jerusalem should be placed under international trusteeship "as the most suitable method of meeting the special problems presented by Jerusalem." This resolution was, however, never implemented. In July 1953, with contemptuous disregard for the United Nations, nearly all the offices of the Israeli government were moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and within a year the ambassadors of both Britain and the United States granted *de facto* recognition to Jerusalem as the capital of Israeli by presenting their credentials to President Ishak Ben Zvi in Jerusalem, although their embassies were still in Tel Aviv—a supine capitulation rendered no less odious by statements from London and Washington that this implied "no change in our attitude to Jerusalem."

The Holy Father has shown his concern for the Holy Land on several occasions; indeed the problem of Palestine being dealt with in no less than three recent Encyclical Letters—*Auspicio Quaedam* (May 1948), *In Multiplicibus* (October 1948) and *Redemptoris Nostri* (Good Friday 1949). In the last Encyclical, the Pope outlined a plan for "a true peace in that region so dear to the heart of every Christian." He stressed the need for an international régime for Jerusalem and its surroundings, for safeguarding of the Holy Places in every part of Palestine with "full access and tranquil sojourn for pilgrims" and for guaranteeing them against profanation by "sinful and worldly entertainments"; he pleaded for liberty for Catholic institutions in Palestine, as well as for the preservation of the rights which Catholics have acquired in Palestine throughout the centuries and "which they have rigorously and constantly defended and solemnly hallowed."



In the words of Mgr. Thomas J. MacMahon, President of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine:

The Holy Father has demonstrated his deep interest in the Holy Land, not only by his words, but also by his works. In setting up . . . the Pontifical Mission for Palestine, he assured its 800,000 homeless that the Vicar of Christ would be present among them by an enduring mission of mercy, which has lasted to this moment and will continue as long as the sad conditions exist in the Middle East.

And in answer to insinuations that the Papal attitude had somewhat changed, Mgr. MacMahon hastened to add:

Catholics the world over must not be deluded by the wave of propaganda in our press, and we must stand firm on the question of Palestine, remembering that Pope Pius XII has written three Encyclical Letters in which he outlined the position of the Church. We should be poor heirs of the Crusaders if we were to abdicate in this our day the position we have taken on the Holy Land of Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

When Israel was established, according to the terms of the *Proclamation of the Independence of the State of Israel* religious freedom was promised to all. In practice, however, the Zionists have proved to be exceedingly intolerant. The Catholic shrine of the Cenacle, on the site of "Upper Room" where Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist and where the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, has been confiscated and converted into the "Tomb of David." Christians are denied entry. The Franciscan Chapel near the Cenacle as well as the Terra Sancta College in Jerusalem have been occupied. In Haifa the St. Charles nuns were driven at the points of bayonets from their hospital for the poor, and in Tiberius the little church has been repeatedly profaned. Christian chaplains are excluded from the Israeli armed forces. The Government-controlled employment service run by *Histradut*, the national labour union, openly discriminates against Christians who apply for work. It is also reported that in Government schools forced "conversions" to Judaism are by no means infrequent, that religious circumcision of infants is compulsory on most collective farms, and that in at least one big

<sup>1</sup> Brooklyn Tablet, 27 November 1954.

city hospital Christian babies have been subjected to ceremonial washings "to offset the effects of Baptism."<sup>1</sup>

The Israeli attitude to Christians is also exemplified in the brutal ejection from their homes of the seven hundred-strong Catholic community belonging to the Maronite rite in the village of Kafr-Biram and by the total destruction of this village by incendiary bombs and the subsequent sale of the village ruins to a junk dealer for £1,500. Less spectacular, perhaps, but no less shameful, was the confiscation of the homes and farms of twenty Christian families in Shefa-Ama, on the pretext that the land was required for "public purposes." Whereas in fact the Zionist Government handed over the title of the land to twenty Jewish families without either offering compensation or providing alternative accommodation to the dispossessed Christians.<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that, according to a report in the *Irish Press* of 9 June 1949, Vatican officials were credited with stating that "Jewish promises on the safety of the Holy Places in Palestine were nothing but words and that cases in which Israelis had defiled religious buildings in Palestine were too numerous to be interpreted except as a calculated campaign against Christianity."

The plight of Christians in the Holy Land is graphically portrayed in a letter sent to Dr. Hertzog, Israeli Minister of Religions, by Mgr. George Hakim, Archbishop of the Greek Catholic Diocese of Acre, Nazareth and the rest of Galilee.

I return from my visit to Ikrit village [wrote Mgr. Hakim], and it grieves me to say I return heartbroken. The scenes of the demolished houses, streets blocked with stones and timber and tottering walls—these atrocities added to the memory of my previous visits to this village, which was in the past alive with its inhabitants, all docile and peaceful Catholics, have filled my heart with anguish and distress. . . . To this I add a new protest against the selection of Christmas Day itself for the destruction of a purely Catholic village.<sup>3</sup>

If this is the treatment accorded Christians in the Holy Land, it requires little imagination to realise that the Arabs who have suffered infinitely more must be filled with such indignation that it must be far from difficult for Soviet conspirators and their

<sup>1</sup> *Brooklyn Tablet*, 3 November, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> *Florida Catholic*, 28 March 1952.

<sup>3</sup> Association for the Preservation of the Faith, Notre Dame University, Ill., U.S.A.

fellow-travelling agents among the Arab intelligentsia to exploit the desire for both vengeance and justice as a means of fomenting disorder in the Middle East. However much the West may fear the consequences of Egyptian purchases of arms from Czechoslovakia, the problem can only be aggravated by ensuring that a greater volume of military supplies is sent to Israel from Britain and the United States. The problem is fundamentally moral.

In spite of natural Christian and post-Christian sympathies for the suffering of the Jews at the hands of German National Socialists before 1945, it is surely the duty of all men of goodwill to speak out on behalf of those now suffering at the hands of Zionist Jews who seek to emulate their former persecutors. It is certainly neither expedient nor moral that the voice of Christian protest should be either silenced or muffled from fear that it might be labelled "anti-Semitic." Anti-Semitism, properly so-called, is indeed the most detestable of all forms of xenophobia—directed as it is against the race who were the spiritual ancestors of Christians; but in the light of the Catholic record during the Second World War we may justly ridicule as paradoxical any suggestion of *Catholic* anti-Semitism. To quote one example: Catholic Spain offered Spanish citizenship to Sephardic Jews in their thousands to save them from the Nazi extermination camps. Writing in the *Jewish Forum*, published in Baltimore, on 17 March 1944, a Professor Levi reported the "stupor" of a Jerusalem rabbi named Neumann, "taking temporary refuge in this pestilential zone which Spain is represented to be by some ignorant intellectuals," at finding an Institute of Hebraic Studies in full activity and responsible for the issue of a monthly review. "For the first time in my life," the rabbi is reported to have declared, "I was received with an extraordinary cordial and friendly welcome, precisely because I was a Jew, and this occurred in the Spain of today which many believe to be anti-Semitic."<sup>1</sup> As Catholics are spiritually Semites, Catholic anti-Semitism is a contradiction in terms. On the other hand, Zionists, who are by no means to be confused with the ordinary Jews, are commonly accustomed to denounce all who oppose their ambitions as "anti-Semitic." It is, however, a plain Christian duty to defend the rights of the Church in the Holy Land, as well as the rights of that truly Semitic people, the Palestine Arabs. Should we then

<sup>1</sup> *Franco of Spain*, by S. F. A. Coles (Neville Spearman, London), p. 106.

be labelled "anti-Semite" by unscrupulous Jewish politicians as a means of evading responsibility for their crimes, it must be borne cheerfully by all who are concerned that justice should prevail and that the Kremlin should be prevented from fishing to advantage in the muddled waters of Mediterranean politics.

## CAROLS

### *Christ is Born: an Infant Boy*

**C**HRIST IS BORN: an infant boy.  
Alleluia! Shout for joy!  
Death had come through Adam's fall:  
Life has come to grace us all.

Christ of all the world is King:  
Gaudeamus! Let us sing!  
Give him hearts no longer cold—  
So bring royal gift of gold.

Christ is God—though truly man:  
Jubilemus all we can!  
Prayers rise as sweetest scents—  
Gift for God is frankincense.

Christ himself Redeemer came—  
Felix culpa!—spurning shame.  
God forgives but—do not err—  
Penance sharp is gift of myrrh.

Christ has come to ask our love:  
Diligamus God above!  
Let us love him—you and me—  
Now and in eternity.

JOSEPH MARSHALL

*Personent Hodie*

LET THE bells ring,  
Joyous children sing  
The birth of a King:  
The Aye-begotten Son, for whom  
Cave or world is narrow room,  
Of a May, May, May,  
Of a May, May, May,  
Born of a Maiden Mother's womb.

## II

In a manger crying,  
'Mid the oxen lying,  
In swaddling-bands sighing,  
All to the world unknown  
He's come unto His own,  
And the Prince, Prince, Prince,  
And the Prince, Prince, Prince,  
The Lord and Prince of Hell is overthrown.

## III

Eastern Kings are riding,  
A star their path is guiding,  
To where the Child's abiding  
Whom their King they're naming,  
Saviour they're acclaiming  
And with gifts of myrrh,  
Gifts of gold and myrrh,  
Gold and myrrh and frankincense God and Man  
proclaiming.

## IV

Mingle with the Angels' lay,  
Grave clerks and trebles gay,  
Your sweetest notes for Christ today,

Paying your homage so meek as you can  
 To the Child of whom the Prophecies ran  
 With a "Praise, praise, praise—"  
 And a "Praise, praise, praise,  
 Praise to God in the highest, and peace to man."

Tr.: A.A.S.

---

NOTE.—The above is a new translation of the carol, *Personent Hodie*, believed to be of fourteenth-century German origin. The Latin original was printed in *Piae Cantiones* in 1580, and is no. 78 in *The Oxford Book of Carols*. Its verse form may be seen from the first two stanzas:

Personent hodie  
 Voces puerulae  
 Laudantes jucunde  
 Qui nobis est natus  
 Summo Deo datus  
 Et de Vir- Vir- Vir-  
 Et de Vir- Vir- Vir-  
 Et de Virgineo ventre procreatus.

In mundo nascitur  
 Pannis involvitur  
 Praesepe ponitur  
 Stabulo brutorum  
 Rector supernorum.  
 Perdidit -dit -dit  
 Perdidit -dit -dit  
 Perdidit spolia princeps infernorum.



# NATIVITY AND PASSION

## *A Medieval Devotion*

By

ERIC COLLEDGE

ONE OF THE MOST distinctive characteristics of late medieval piety in Western Europe is the emergence of the figure so aptly named by a recent historian<sup>1</sup> "the Gothic Christ." As the Middle Ages draw to a close, the older presentation of our crucified Lord as King and Judge, reigning upon the Cross which He had made a throne, as the Church sang in *Vexilla regis*, the awful, still, remote, mysterious figure which we can still see in such primitive crucifixes as that of the Calvary-group in the Cathedral Crypt in Bologna, disappears in favour of a new aspect and presentation of the Passion. About the year 1200, as we search through the art histories, we find this change first manifesting itself in pictures and carvings of the Crucifixion. Christ is ever more rarely shown as clothed and crowned: His head instead begins to be crowned with thorns, His body to be represented in faithful and harrowing anatomical detail. The head, once nobly upright, inclines more and more: the solemn, all-seeing Byzantine eyes are closed in death; and the contorted agony of the limbs makes us feel the agony of His death as He hung from the nails. This new "Gothic" crucifix is planned and executed as an assault upon the spectator's emotions; and there is a wealth of contemporary literature to witness to this. We await with interest the historical examination of such literature which Professor Pickering has promised us: this present brief note has been written in recollection (with some reservations) of his statement that any uninitiated reader might be forgiven for supposing that one of the latest and most extreme of the medieval German Passion-narratives, certainly a gruesome catalogue of the

<sup>1</sup> F. P. Pickering: *Das gotische Christusbild: zu den Quellen mittelalterlicher Passionsdarstellungen*, in *Euphorion*, vol. 47 (1953), pp 16-37; and see the present writer's account of this important article in *The Life of the Spirit*, vol. 8 (1953), pp. 190-2.

various physical torments supposed to have been suffered by Our Lord from His arrest until His death, is "the work of a sadistic maniac";<sup>1</sup> and it seeks to throw a little light upon a comparably "Gothic," apparently equally gruesome conceit of late medieval popular devotion, the idea of the Christ-Child already suffering in His infancy the dolours of the Passion.

This idea is presented to us in its most arresting form in two small drawings in an antiphonary, written in the Low Countries circa A.D. 1500, now MS. 46 in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.<sup>2</sup> This service-book has been ornamented by pasting in initials and illustrations cut from other, somewhat older, manuscripts. On f. 102<sup>r</sup> is one such ornament,<sup>3</sup> which shows the infant Christ, climbing from what may be either a crib or a tomb. The child's body is covered with bloody wounds, crudely drawn and coloured. The second is on fol. 141<sup>v</sup> of MS. 46:4 it is of different, superior, slightly earlier workmanship: and here the infant Christ is shown seated, within a bloody heart, itself superimposed upon a cross. The child is unwounded, but carries a birch in its right hand, a many-knotted scourge in its left.

The symbolism of the heart in which the child sits must be the subject of a separate and much longer study. Here, it will suffice to emphasise that the heart is that of the human penitent, loving Christ and enthroning Him there.

But what of this idea of Christ in infancy already endowed with the attributes and enduring the wounds of the Passion? As we search elsewhere for parallels to these very rare pictures, we shall find that they are not symptomatic of "sadistic mania," but rather that they present in an arresting form ideas about devotion to the Nativity and childhood of Christ which were in themselves wholesome and sound.

A landmark in the history of the development of such popular devotions to the humanity of Our Lord is found in the *Meditations*, for long falsely attributed to St. Augustine, then, with more probability, to St. Anselm of Canterbury, and now once more generally known to be the work of St. Aelred of Rievaulx

<sup>1</sup> *Christi Leiden in einer Vision geschaut*, edited F. P. Pickering, Manchester University Press, 1952, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Fitzwilliam Museum* (Cambridge, 1895), pp. 97-8.

<sup>3</sup> Fig. 1. This and fig. 2 are reproduced by permission of the Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

<sup>4</sup> Fig. 2.



Figure 1



Figure 2

(A.D. 1110-1167), and a part of his *Rule for Enclosed Women*.<sup>1</sup> These meditations, it is thought, were written by Aelred for his sister, who was a recluse; and in them we have an early example, which was to exert great influence in succeeding centuries, of the type of "contemplation" recommended to and practised by religious who, even though they might be canonically obliged to recite the Office, were cut off from the liturgical life of the Church because they understood no Latin. Often, too, they could not even read in their own language.<sup>2</sup> Aelred recommends such women to rehearse in their own memories what they know of the principal scenes of the life of Our Lord. "So that the sweetest love of Jesus may grow in your disposition, you must practise a threefold meditation—that is, by recalling those things which are past, by undergoing those things which are present, by pondering those things which are to come." These are his admonitions for "meditation" upon the Nativity:

Hasten, I bid you, hasten, that you may have a share in such joys. Prostrate yourself before the Mother and her Child, and in her womb embrace your Spouse, worship her Love whom she bears within her. With all devotion follow Him who thus comes into Bethlehem, and when you have found a shelter, be at hand to play the midwife. When once the babe is laid in the manger, call out with a joyful voice, crying aloud with Isaiah: "To us a child is born, and a son is given to us."<sup>3</sup>

This text shows, in an already well-developed form, the characteristics which such "meditations" were to exhibit until the close of the epoch. The author's appeal is primarily to the sentiment and to the emotions of his audience: and they are to be encouraged to imagine themselves as taking an active part in these imaginative reconstructions of the principal events in the life of Christ. Nor, we should observe, do even these early devotional guides confine themselves to the strict letter of the Gospels. Wilmart cites as an early example, "neither unique nor exceptional," part of one of St. Anselm's prayers, composed, according to Wilmart, during the saint's years at Bec (1063-93),

<sup>1</sup> A. Wilmart: *Auteurs spirituels et textes dévots du moyen âge latin* (Paris, 1932), pp. 196-7.

<sup>2</sup> The wider problems represented by such illiterate and Latinless religious will be discussed by the present writer in an edition of *The Chastising of God's Children*, now at press.

<sup>3</sup> *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 32, 1465-6, and vol. 158, 785-6.



where Our Lady is addressed as "thou who didst stand by as thine innocent, only Son was bound, scourged, slaughtered."<sup>1</sup>

Such "meditations" were to develop in several directions. One leads to the field in which Professor Pickering is working: the horrific representation, with a wealth of apocryphal detail, of the agonies of the Passion. Another, however, leads to an all too human imagination of the scenes of the Nativity, in which medieval poets and writers, painters and woodcarvers were left free to indulge fancies which only sometimes good taste saved from a mawkish sentimentality. It is unnecessary here to document this cult, which was to grow, of devotion to the merely human features of the Nativity, and particularly to the physical beauty of the child Christ: but from time to time we receive warnings from medieval writers that such devotion is not, in itself, enough. One is reported by St. Bridget of Sweden, writing in the middle of the fourteenth century of one of her "dialogues" with the Virgin, who is made to say of her own love for her infant Son: "When I looked at my Son and considered how beautiful He was, my soul dripped with joy like a flower with dew. But when I looked at His hands and feet and thought of the prophet's words and knew that they would be pierced with nails, my eyes were filled with tears and it was as though a knife went through my heart."<sup>2</sup> Here St. Bridget's sound theology and stern common-sense is suggesting an antidote to sentimental gushing over the baby Jesus: we must always see in that baby the Man of Sorrows. Another contemporary source, a sermon formerly ascribed to Tauler, and certainly of German, mid-fourteenth century, Dominican origin, puts the same idea even more bluntly:

There was a sister of our Order who often desired to see Our Lord at the time when He was still a child. One day, in the middle of her devotions, Our Lord appeared to her in the form of a little child, but it was wrapped and wound around in a tangle of thorns, so that she could not pick up the child unless she were brave enough to thrust her hands among the thorns. And she was granted to understand that anyone who desires to possess this Child must make up his mind to suffer the cruellest pains.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Op. cit., p. 506.

<sup>2</sup> Johannes Jørgensen, translated Ingeborg Lund: *Saint Bridget of Sweden* (2 vols., London, 1954), I, p. 261, quoting *Revelation* VI 57.

<sup>3</sup> D. Helander: *J. Tauler als Prediger* (Lund, 1923), pp. 346 et seq.



What St. Bridget states, the Dominican preacher only implies: but the fully-developed idea of a Christ-Child mutilated and wounded is found in an "example," a preacher's stock moral tale, which appears several times in England during the fourteenth century, and is probably even earlier in origin. It is used as a caution against swearing, especially by Christ, His body and His wounds: and in perhaps the best extant form it runs:

There was a man accustomed commonly to swear by God's limbs: and when he was on his deathbed a most beautiful lady appeared to him, carrying a little child all of whose body was covered with wounds, and asking the sick man what he thought should be done to judge those who had so horribly wounded so tender a baby. He said to her: "Such a man deserves the vilest death, for the child cannot live because of its wounds." And she said to him: "You have pronounced your own judgment: for I am Christ's mother, and this is my Son, and as often as you have taken vain oaths upon Him, you have wounded and cruelly dismembered Him."<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we have some of the ideas which would be called to the mind of a medieval man who saw such pictures as these of an infant Saviour bearing the Sacred Wounds or the emblems of the Passion. He would know that such a picture had been made to remind him that Christmas Day precedes and leads to Good Friday, and that the helpless baby in the crib shall come again as the terrible judge of our sins.

<sup>1</sup> *The Sermons of Thomas Brinton, Bishop of Rochester (1373-1389)*, edited by Sister Mary Aquinas Devlin, O.P. (London, Camden Society Third Series LXXXV-VI, 1954), vol. I, p. 191. For an argument that this sermon is not Brinton's, and dates from c. A.D. 1250, see the review by H. G. Richardson in *Speculum* XXX (April 1955), pp. 267-71.

# A POLITICAL MANOEUVRE

*What Really Happened in Australia*

By

W. G. SMITH

**A**N ORGANISATION of sincere Catholics working within the field of politics is always an object of suspicion to the rabid secularist, the bigot, and the political opportunist. Other people are not unduly disturbed if such an organisation shows some concern for religious and spiritual values and takes rather a high view of the functions and duties of those holding public office. But to the secularist and the bigot these attitudes indicate the presence of an alien and dangerous force to be resisted at practically any cost, and in the resulting situation the opportunist politician whose plans have gone astray may discern a heaven-sent means of escape. For public attention can very easily be withdrawn from some sore point if enough passion can be aroused elsewhere.

These generalities find a classic illustration in the recent attack on a comparatively small Catholic body in Australia. The trouble stemmed primarily from the theoretical barrenness of the Australian Labour Party, and from the difficulties that the lack of a constructive and dynamic programme have brought to the Party's leader, Dr. Herbert Vere Evatt. Labour's loss of three elections in Federal politics during the last six years, two of them under Dr. Evatt's leadership, suggested to many Labour politicians that the time had come for a change in the Party leadership. Actually, considerably more needs to be changed before the Labour policy can hope to attract sufficient voters to win an election; but to many members that is not yet obvious.

Amongst some of the malcontents the cry has been simply "Evatt must go!" Others, realising that among alternative leaders there is none of sufficient stature to replace Dr. Evatt successfully,

have been left with the dilemma of wanting to get rid of him, and not quite knowing how best to go about it. Dr. Evatt himself derived little cheer from the views of either group, and his recent activities are most reasonably interpreted as springing from his need to create a diversion that would distract attention from the Party leadership.

Dr. Evatt's own statement of his case was that he found it his duty to root out a subversive influence that was trying to take over the Party, put it at the service of a barren anti-Communism, eliminate all the great Labour principles, and eventually form a body that would be more conservative in type than the Liberal Party itself.

At first Dr. Evatt identified the subversive element with a small number of Victorian Federal parliamentarians. But the attack on these soon branched out to include an organisation with which they were connected, the Australian Labour Party Industrial Groups. Finally, attention was concentrated on another organisation external to the Labour Party itself, a shadowy Catholic body known as The Movement. This, it was alleged, was master-minded by a person with the dangerous name of Bartolomeo Santamaria and was backed by the Australian Catholic Hierarchy.

According to Dr. Evatt the Movement represented a danger to Australia perilously akin to Fascism. Although itself organised on the Communist cell system, it was obsessed, Dr. Evatt alleged, with the danger of Communism, and aimed at dominating the Labour Party through the anti-Communist Australian Labour Party Groups. Moreover (and here an element of confusion enters the Doctor's case), the Movement, though "dedicated to a barren anti-Communism," nevertheless had an ultra-Conservative programme, which it intended to force on the Labour Party.

Dispassionate argument is not Dr. Evatt's favourite political weapon, and he now chose the appeal to prejudice and emotion by the use of such phrases as "the Menzies-Fadden-Santamaria-Fascist clique." This technique succeeded in whipping up a good deal of the anti-Catholic feeling that usually lies dormant in Australian public life. If Mr. Santamaria's name had been Brown, things might have been different, but the Italian name conjured up all the old phantoms. Dr. Evatt himself generally avoided the mistake of attacking the Church directly and on one important occasion stated definitely that the Movement had

no connection with Catholic Action and was not an instrument of the Catholic Hierarchy. Yet it was widely believed that the extreme position taken up by Dr. Evatt's official and voluntary allies was not unwelcome to him; and he was known to have been interested in the possibilities of rallying non-Catholic voters by an attack on the Church. In the popular mind the Movement and Catholic Action became identified, and even responsible non-Catholic clergymen showed disedifying eagerness to reinforce the belief. One of these probably reached the peak of violent and unfounded accusation when he wrote, in a press release to the Australian papers (23 May 1955):

It is ironical that those who now protest against the prostitution and perversion of a great political party by an ecclesiastical imperialism should be branded as sectarians. . . . It is one of the tragedies of the present situation that the Catholic Church should have betrayed its responsibilities in an unedifying pursuit of power. . . . In other parts of the world—particularly in Spain, Canada, and South America, where ecclesiastical coercion and intimidation are notorious—the same policy has been pursued.

Obviously the whole situation is not without importance; and the answers given to all these rather vague charges need to be studied. They can be taken in the following order: the relationship between the Movement and the Catholic Bishops; the Movement's alleged purpose of controlling the Labour Party; the possibility of a subversive effect on the Labour Party of the policy attributed to the Movement members.

In its origins, the story goes back to the period between 1943 and 1945, when the dangerous extent of Communist infiltration into the Australian Trade Union Movement was first noticed. A number of Trade Unionists, frightened by the power they saw building up, approached various interested parties in the community in the hope of organising a united force to challenge the Communists in the unions. Mr. Santamaria himself told the Australian Press how he was interviewed while at work in one of the offices of the Catholic Action Movement. He was asked to awaken Catholics to the danger that faced the country, and to encourage and help them to take their full part in union activities; he agreed to do so because he too saw the gravity of the situation—the Communists, already in control of the key

trade unions throughout the nation, were seriously preparing for a revolutionary attempt in the not-too-distant future.

From that time Mr. Santamaria added this work of organisation and inspiration to his Catholic Action work; but in his mind and intention he drew a clear distinction between the two types of work. His work as a Catholic Action leader depended on the Hierarchy and, directed by the Bishops, was in some sense an extension of their apostolic action. His campaign against Communism was not specifically Catholic; it was inspired by patriotism and civic duty and, although he aimed at influencing his co-religionists primarily, he sought to influence them in their status as citizens and to urge them to perform their full duty as citizens. Various members of the Hierarchy have supported Mr. Santamaria in his claim to be acting according to this distinction. Their public statements have shown that they regarded the organisation known as The Movement as the means of co-ordinating the efforts of Catholics against Communism in the union and political fields. These Catholics were a body of private citizens doing a necessary public service. As Catholics, they were subject in their work only to the *teaching* authority of the Church, and Mr. Santamaria sought the approval of the Bishops for what he hoped to do to check Communism. Naturally a body that was formed to attack and defeat Communism by means within the moral law could do a great service to the Church, and the Bishops gave their approval and support and never withdrew them. But the Bishops neither initiated nor directed Mr. Santamaria's activities. They neither intended nor even hoped that the Movement would take over the Labour Party and run it for the purposes of the Church. Dr. Mannix, Archbishop of Melbourne, one of the most respected and influential churchmen in Australia, stated this bluntly. His statement was confirmed last April by the Joint Pastoral Letter on "The Menace of Communism," which summed up the situation: After recalling the immensely swift expansion of Communism, the Bishops wrote:

It is a well-known fact that during the last ten years Catholics in Australia have endeavoured to form a strong public opinion against Communist activities. This was a noble undertaking patriotically directed to safeguard our Fatherland, the rights and liberties of our fellow citizens, and the free exercise of religion. The leaders of this campaign foresaw, as the history of subsequent



years has proved, that the Communist plan to capture Trade Unions and other public bodies in Australia was part of a clearly designed scheme to seize complete political control of the country.

Australian public opinion generally failed to realise that in the year 1945 every major Trade Union with one exception, was in the hands of the Communists.

After referring to the spectacular success of dedicated men, of different religious faiths, who banded together to fight Communism in the unions, the Bishops quoted the Communists' open declaration: "It is a question for us of setting out consciously to foster a Left Wing in the Labour Party."<sup>1</sup> They continued:

It is therefore most deplorable that the only effective way yet found of defeating Communism in industrial life has been destroyed by political intrigue.

Many people justly fear that the cause of Communism has been advanced considerably during the last few months.

The Church is not concerned with Party politics as such. It has no desire to establish a Catholic domination in public life. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

As was to be expected, charges of "ecclesiastical imperialism" continued to be levelled by the malicious or the uninformed. But a minority of more objective commentators had reached practically the same conclusions as the Bishops even before the Pastoral was issued. The *Sydney Morning Herald's* Canberra correspondent had already written that the Movement's connection with Catholic Action was tenuous, even accidental, and had noted that charges of illegal or undemocratic methods on the part of the Movement in such matters as union elections remained unproved.

What of the allegation that the Movement had attempted to take over the Labour Party? In the various union conferences and inquiries that have been held since December of last year, no evidence has been produced that comes anywhere near proving the charge. Dr. Evatt accused the Movement of wishing to introduce into Australian life the procedures of the Police State; but he spoiled his case by himself using against its members and associates methods which have, with good reason, been held to violate the constitutions of the Victorian Labour Party. More definite allegations were made at the Australian Workers Union

<sup>1</sup> *Communist Review*, July 1952, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Pastoral, *The Menace of Communism*, abbreviated.



national convention in January; but in the end they proved to be mere statement, and they fell by counter-denials that seemed to fit the known facts better than the allegations did. Mr. Dougherty, the Secretary of the Workers Union, had said that the Movement had demanded the removal from office of certain leading politicians and unionists; had ordered the national secretary of the Ironworkers Union to criticise Dr. Evatt strongly in the press; and, through one of its members, Mr. J. Kerr, Q.C. whom Mr. Dougherty said was its lawyer, had obtained the introduction by the New South Wales Labour Government of the Compulsory Unionism Bill, as calculated to swell the membership of the unions it controlled. The first charge was denied by those who must have known the facts, and even one of the alleged victims refused to comment. Mr. Short, the national secretary of the Ironworkers, a non-Catholic, affirmed that his criticisms of Dr. Evatt had been made on his own initiative; and anyone who has watched his fighting career in his union can well believe him. The State Premier, Mr. Cahill, said no influence had been put on him either by the Movement or by Mr. Santamaria in person—he did not know Mr. Santamaria. And Mr. Kerr said he was neither a member of the Movement nor its lawyer. Mr. Santamaria himself, coming reluctantly into the fray because his friends thought that he should personally answer Mr. Dougherty's personal attack, gave a press release to the newspapers in which, after exposing certain inconsistencies in Mr. Dougherty's speech, he denied that either he or his associates had entertained the ambition of gaining control of the Labour Party. To one who knows the dedicated lives of Mr. Santamaria and his allies his statements are as credible as the charge of Fascist intrigue is improbable and fanciful. One sees why Mr. Chamberlain, the Federal President of the Australian Labour Party and a supporter of Dr. Evatt, lamely admitted that the attack had proceeded from "a state of mind"!

There remains the charge that the activities of the Movement tended to the subversion of the Socialist principles of the Labour Party. Now, even in British Labour circles, it is being gradually realised that a party dedicated by its Constitution to the nationalisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange, faces the second half of the twentieth century with a millstone round its neck. The ordinary man is beginning to see

that nationalisation means confiscation, that social services can be bought at an extravagantly high price and must be paid for at the cost of wages. In Australia, where working conditions and standards of living are very high, and where under a Liberal Government real wages have increased steadily in the last four years, the slogans of doctrinaire Socialism are patently visionary. The charge of a betrayal of Socialism, moreover, comes rather oddly from Dr. Evatt when one remembers how, forced to face realities by the defeat of the Chifley Labour Government in 1949, he hastened to assure the public that "nationalisation of banking is a completely dead issue politically, legally and practically." At the Australian Labour Party Conference two years ago he went as far as a man can go when he is leader of a party officially tied to Socialist objectives; on that occasion he explained that nationalisation was to be considered only a weapon of last resort, adding, with a touch of *naïveté*, that in any case the Commonwealth lacked the constitutional power to nationalise industries. It is, again, astonishing that Dr. Evatt, who viewed with such alarm the "sinister" ideas and policies of Mr. Santamaria and his associates, should before the last election, less than two years ago, have invited Mr. Santamaria (presumably to win the prestige of his name) to assist him in the preparation of his own official policy speech. This incident goes far to explain the look of exasperation which comes to the face of so many Australians when they hear that Dr. Evatt has discovered some fresh conspiracy against himself.

It has been suggested that the policies advocated by members of the Movement have recently changed. This is untrue. Over the years the Movement has consistently pressed for policies suggested by a realistic appraisal of the actual problems confronting Australia, policies, incidentally, that are broadly consistent with Catholic principles. For years the Movement has advocated, and still advocates, greater concentration on primary industry, greater assistance for families, co-operative house-building projects, intelligent decentralisation, the encouragement of migrants fitted to open up undeveloped country areas, profit sharing, the improvement of human relations in industry, wage increases through increased productivity, secret and honest ballots in union elections, support for the Arbitration Court and improvement of its machinery, a resolute stand against Communism,

increased assistance for the Asian peoples, and a firm alliance between the free nations.

In these policies there is nothing that conflicts with a whole-hearted will to help the workers and the under-privileged; and nothing that could not be brought into a Labour platform. In fact, if the Australian Labour Party does not itself adopt at least some of them, it is hard to see what it can possibly offer the voters beyond the promise of fantastic social service benefits and wage rises that have no relation to Australia's present economic capacity.

Several commentators in Australian papers have taken this line in the last year, and have pointed out that Dr. Evatt's rejection of the theories produced in the Movement and the Industrial Groups, and his enmity towards the men who produced them, have cut off from his party the only source from which new, constructive, and practical ideas have been coming, or are likely to come for some time. Without this infusion of vitality, the Labour Party, already embarrassed for a policy, faces intellectual stagnation.

It is painful to record that in the everyday political field Dr. Evatt's campaign has already damaged both his party and the country. As a direct result of the dispute, the Victorian Labour Government was hopelessly split and suffered a disastrous defeat at the recent election; many good and capable men lost their positions, and the Party retired to the political wilderness. Then, in a further attempt to break the influence of the Industrial Groups, Dr. Evatt's followers in the unions formed a rather shady, officially unacknowledged, alliance with the Communists who were contesting positions in two important union elections, with the result that the Communists have now regained substantial influence in the unions concerned, the Victorian Railways Union and the Victorian branch of the Waterside Workers Federation. According to some reports they have full control. It took years of work by good Labour men in the past to win these bodies from Communist domination, and it is sad to see the effects of that work destroyed as a result of political intrigue.

In New South Wales things are not quite so bad on the surface; for although Dr. Evatt and his associates tried to take over there also, the Victorian *débâcle* made them much more cautious, and after a period of uneasy compromise and jockeying for position

the members of the Industrial Groups (now no longer recognised as belonging to the Labour Party) won a considerable victory in elections for the New South Wales State executive. However, the split is real and continues, as it does in the other States; prospects for a strong stand against Communism, as for future parliamentary success, are dim. In consequence Australia seems likely to face the disadvantages which come to a democracy when the Opposition party is weak and speaks with an uncertain voice.

From the religious point of view, although Dr. Evatt's actions have done the Church no very great harm, they have made her work, at least for the present, harder. The outburst of sectarianism was very violent, and dying prejudices have revived. These old suspicions must now again hinder the development of the Church's influence, as they hindered it in the past. Secularism and materialism are ever-present dangers in Australian life, and they are not lessened by sectarian suspicions and animosities. Australia will pay for a political leader's attachment to power.

## A SONG

By

VIOLET CLIFTON

THE long silence  
God held against men  
Greek and barbarian

That long silence  
At last is broken  
Utterance from heaven.

The long silence  
By an infant cry  
Changed into poetry.

. . .

The trees are singing  
A song I told before  
How that they cradle and coffin man  
Take him from shore to shore  
And are the pattern in the parable  
That shows how once the Spirit's ideal man  
Fell somehow from the spirit plan  
But that the wrong was righted  
Upon the trembling aspen.

. . .

The woods sing the wonderful warmth  
Thrown out by tree of naked North.  
With miser finger  
It seizes the scant sunshine  
To hoard against waste winter  
Not squandering the glow  
As the leaf-laden do.  
On this day of Christ-Mass  
The fir-tree has a part in festival  
Being graced and gauded with gifts.  
Since giving and loving are all.

. . .

So now that the silence is broken  
Now that the Silent has spoken  
Now that the crown and the sceptre,  
By the fiery fusion  
The intimate intrusion  
Of Godhead into nature,  
By poor Bairn is bestowed  
Let us close-cherish man  
And even to the flesh unfettered beast  
Give love-part in life's feast  
And reverence the Kingdom of green things,  
Creation caught up in the Christic wings.

. . .

The long silence  
Of dark and of void  
By God's utterance stirred.

*Let there be light.*  
By the master-word  
The primal day is sired.

Now the same voice  
Utters the same verb  
Light out-springs from a womb.

So! the dark silence  
Again is broken.  
The love-spell is spoken.

## BARK PAINTING TO WATER COLOUR

By

L. A. BINGHAM

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS the lonely silence of the Australian continent, the last great land mass to be discovered, remained obscure and unbroken. That very isolation resulted in the Stone Age aborigines of that country producing singularly characteristic art expressions vastly different from the art forms of the Old World. Because of their dwindling numbers and their gradual contact with the white man's civilisation the culture of the aborigines is nearly spent. In recent years artists and anthropologists alike have therefore taken an increasing interest in the various forms of art practised by these wandering tribesmen.

Like that of all primitive peoples, their early art was chiefly concerned with things which provided them with the means of survival. They ate birds and fish and were well aware of the different species, which were edible and which were not. They therefore attached great importance to drawing these creatures in great detail; and since they possessed meagre physical means with



which to work, most of these drawings were in the form of rock engravings and cave paintings. The cave paintings were done with charcoal, red ochre and the ashes of their fires, while the mixing medium was usually an animal fat. If a drawing had a spiritual significance human blood was used. A piece of soft wood or bark frayed at the end served as a brush. Sometimes the aboriginal artist drew in outline a quarter of an inch broad, filling in the spaces with red and black lines. Occasionally his black and red are solid. Except in South Australia, paintings with a white material are rarer because of the comparative difficulty of obtaining it.

In Central Australia, where the rock is very poor to paint on, the native artist was forced to adapt what he had to his cultural needs. Instead of designs embodying animals and reptiles, the art of that area consisted mostly of concentric circles and parallel lines at various angles. By contrast, in abundant Arnhem Land, the last stronghold of the uncivilised aborigines, there is a rich store of bark paintings, rock carvings, and paintings on the cave walls illustrating the age-old legends of the tribes.

In this genuine primitive art there are certain very attractive qualities, such as freshness of approach, uninhibited charm, a natural feeling for decoration, an engaging lack of perspective and a spontaneous sense of rhythm. Engraving was done with a hard stone, and consisted of grooves and punctures in alignment. In stencilling, the subject was placed on the rock and the medium squirted from the artist's mouth.

In the Flinders Range in South Australia the rock engravings are believed to be over five thousand years old, more ancient than the pyramids of Egypt. In these primitive art galleries generations of native artists have been at work, design being heaped on design until the entire surfaces of the rocks have been covered. Although no doubt the genuine antiquity of these engravings will always be queried, there is a startling piece of evidence to support it; for in these rock engravings the representation of the platypus is common, and no such animals exist in that area today; indeed the lake systems in which the platypus lived dried up during the late Pliocene period. How, then, did the platypus become a model for the aboriginal artist if this animal has not existed there for a million years?

Tree carving was another craft followed by the aborigines,

particularly the Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi tribes in New South Wales. Some excellent examples of their work may still be seen. These trees were carved for burial purposes, and also for ceremonial purposes to mark the grounds on which the ancient rituals were held.

Bark painting, rock engraving, cave painting and tree carving all represent the work of genuine primitive artists. The question might well be asked as to whether contact with the white man has had any effect on aboriginal art.

In 1934 a remarkable incident occurred. In the arid hills outside Alice Springs in Central Australia an aborigine named Namatjira watched a white Australian artist, Rex Battarbee, at work on a landscape. Wide-eyed, the aborigine saw the scene transferred to canvas as he watched. He then begged the means from Battarbee to enable him to do likewise. Always a friend of the natives, Battarbee gave him a few directions and what equipment he could spare. Namatjira learned to use the white man's water-colour, a difficult and alien medium to him, in two months. Later his work was exhibited in various parts of Australia, meeting with immediate success. Since he had that sympathy with a landscape which has for thousand of years occupied the thoughts of his people, Namatjira was at once able to indicate in his work a keen appreciation of aridity, and of the numerous grotesque forms that make up the strange scenery of his tribal country. In turn other aborigines living at the Hermannsburg Mission in Central Australia learned from Namatjira. The Aranda Art Group was formed to protect their interests, and it was not long before their work was being acclaimed by both critics and public alike. Finally, at an art exhibition in Sydney in April 1952, something of a record was established when forty-nine paintings by Australian aboriginal artists were sold within forty minutes of its opening. These were the work of seven aborigines, none of whom had ever visited a city.

One woman artist, Cordula Ebatarinja, had never shown any work previously. Her work reveals an observant and skilful water-colourist in what is essentially a European medium. Like her fellow-tribesmen, whose painting is surprisingly uniform in approach and technique, she has a strong sense of colour which reflects the brilliant sun-drenched landscapes of Central Australia with their white "ghost" gums, stark mountain ranges and red



*A water colour by Cordula Ebatarinja depicts the approach of rain clouds with a foreground of "ghost" gums in the arid region of Central Australia.*



*A bark painting of a parrot fish, typical of the primitive aboriginal art of Arnhem Land, North Australia.*



*A drawing by a teen-age aboriginal of a native corroboree.*

soils. Another artist, Edwin Pareroultja, has considerable power and originality by any standards, including those of Europe. The work of his brother Otto, with its highly individual style of swirling rhythms, is perhaps even more striking.

Many critics of Namatjira and his fellow aboriginal artists contend that they do not build on the culture of their own people, that their work remains an imitation of the West. It must be conceded, however, that they have infused into many of their paintings that which no white man could teach them—the deep aboriginal feeling for country and an innate sense of mysticism and ancient magic.

Namatjira's entrance into the art world was followed by an amazing development of artistic skill among a group of aboriginal children at Carrolup in Western Australia. At an exhibition of paintings for teachers at Albany their work was so outstanding in the way of originality, colour and drawing ability, that the teachers would not accept it as unassisted child-art. Four of the native children were brought to the exhibition and told to give a personal demonstration. The teachers present were astounded and thoughtful when each of the children had finished an original painting. Then followed a newspaper controversy as to whether these aboriginal children should be given art lessons or left to their own devices. Unfortunately, while the long arguments continued, most of the children grew up and went out to work on farms as labourers, leaving their art behind them. However, when the tribal spirits have finally fled before the encroachment of "civilisation," the paintings and carvings of kangaroos bounding through fire-charred trees stark against the verdant bush, of black men stalking their prey in lonely valleys, and of painted tribesmen dancing round corroboree fires, will be all that remains of the ancient culture of the aborigines of Australia.

# OCEANIA AND IDENTIFIABILITY

*Dr. Mascall on Ordination*

By

ANTHONY A. STEPHENSON

## I. OCEANIA

IN HIS PAMPHLET,<sup>1</sup> as in his long letter to the *Church Times* of 28 October 1955, Dr. E. L. Mascall persists in assuming, against the plain meaning of the text, that the principal defect which Pope Leo XIII, in his *Apostolicae curae*, found in the second Edwardian Ordinal was a defect of intention. It was in fact a defect of form. Dr. Mascall thinks that it is defect of intention that is in question in the controversies about the second Edwardian Ordinal and in the present controversy about orders in the Church of South India. In both, what is in question is defect of rite, particularly of the form. Dr. Mascall's mistake is excusable insofar as this confusion of minister's intention and the meaning of the form of the sacrament has bedevilled discussion ever since the Anglican Archbishops, referring to a passage in *Apostolicae curae* in which Leo referred to intention in the traditional sense, used the phrase "the intention of the Church" in a sentence which was relevant only if interpreted as designating the *meaning put upon the form* by the officially expressed doctrine and intention of the Church using the form.<sup>2</sup> It is, moreover, a consolation

<sup>1</sup> *The Convocations and South India*, Mowbray, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Apos. curae*, C.T.S. (H 311) Trans., chap. 33, where "intended to do what the Church does" and the reference to heretical or infidel ministers show that Leo is thinking of the subjective (minister's) intention; moreover, that is the traditional meaning of "intention" in Catholic sacramental theology. For the Anglican Archbishops use of the word in their *Answer* (1897) see *Anglican Orders* (S.P.C.K., 1954), pp. 31-32 and 48-49, where the phrases "the intention of our Church" and "its public formularies and definite pronouncements" indicate the use of the word in the (apparently) new sense of the meaning put upon the form by a Church's official doctrine.



to lesser men to find a giant like Dr. Mascall, some of whose contributions to theological studies have been so valuable, guilty of this elementary confusion. The consequences, nevertheless, are deplorable.

Dr. Mascall writes in his pamphlet: "It is not always realised what very slight intention is required . . . for the valid performance of a sacrament."<sup>1</sup> We, at least, realise it clearly; we have long been familiar with the teaching of Bellarmine and Sylvius on the point. Dr. Mascall continues, astonishingly: "The minimising nature of the traditional Western doctrine of intention is sometimes obscured by the fact that Roman Catholic controversialists in England have found themselves in the uncomfortable position of having to defend the condemnation of Anglican Orders by Pope Leo XIII and of having to improvise special theories and distinctions in the attempt to maintain the defective intention [*sic*] of Anglican ordinations without at the same time rendering the orders of the Roman Church itself of doubtful authenticity." Let us repeat: all this rests upon a deplorable confusion. The gravamen of the charge against the Ordinal of 1552 is that the *form* had not the Catholic meaning; it did not, as a sacramental form must do, "signify the grace" of the sacrament. The rite introduced by the Reformers in place of the Catholic Pontifical did not signify the priest's essential supernatural power to consecrate and offer the Body of Christ. By commission and omission it signified the denial of the essential priestly power. Leo was thus basing himself on the first principle of sacramental theology, namely, that sacraments, being symbols, "must both signify the grace which they cause, and cause the grace which they signify,"<sup>2</sup> and he judged the Ordinal of 1552 invalid on the ground that, introduced at a time and in a place where heresies about the Mass and the ministry were rife, it removed from the Sarum rite every reference, in action, prayer or phrase, to the priest's power to transubstantiate and to offer. It was the origin, character and spirit of the Ordinal itself which, above all, Leo examined and judged unsatisfactory. It is true that he then added one brief paragraph about intention, the paragraph (33) beginning: "Cum hoc igitur intimo formae defectu

<sup>1</sup> P. 9. All references to the pamphlet are to pp. 9-12.

<sup>2</sup> *Apos. curae*, C.T.S. (H 311) trans., chap. 24; Denzinger, *Enchir. Symb.* (1928, ed. 16, 17) n. 1963.

coniunctus est defectus intentionis"; but the main weight of his indictment fell on the rite itself, and his secondary charge of defect of intention was an inference from the Reformers' change of the rite. There is, therefore, no truth in the accusation that the Oceania case shows that Catholics have devised special theories or distinctions to defend the condemnation of the Edwardian Ordinal. The Oceania baptisms were valid because the form was kept, and Anglican orders are invalid because the form was changed.

For intention it suffices that a person performs the rite seriously, as a sacrament. Thus a young priest rehearsing the ceremonies of the Mass, or "practising" baptism, neither consecrates nor baptises, because he does not intend to say Mass or baptise. In the other sort of relevant case, a Buddhist can baptise if he intends not just to bath the baby, but to do what the Christians do. A heretic or pagan, that is, can confer the sacrament of baptism (and does if he intends to) even though he disapproves of it, disbelieves its efficacy, or has erroneous opinions about its effects.

If, however, the false beliefs of a Church lead it to change the form of the sacrament, or (as they so easily can in Orders) result in the very word "priest," "presbyter," or "bishop" having an un-Catholic meaning, then, of course, the sacrament is invalid. Both hypotheses are relevant to the second Edwardian Ordinal and (particularly the second) to ordinations in CSI, whose *Constitution* states that the acceptance of episcopacy "does not commit it to any particular interpretation of episcopacy or to any particular view or belief concerning orders of the ministry."

Dr. Mascall, however, still pursuing the wrong hare, both in his pamphlet and in his letter introduces the case of the Methodist Oceanian baptisms into his discussion of Anglican and CSI Orders. But the Methodist baptisms in Oceania have nothing to do with either case, since in these there was no question of defect of form (the rite being properly performed), but alleged defect of intention. The Central Oceania case was this. When some natives who had been baptised by Methodists (who do not believe that baptism regenerates) later became Catholics, the Consultors of the Holy Office declared in 1872 that although it was "openly preached in the sect," and sometimes explicitly declared by the minister before he baptised, that baptism "had no effect on the soul," these facts did not justify them in auto-

matically declaring the baptisms in all cases doubtful because of defect of intention in such sort that they should all be conditionally repeated. The Consultors saw that the Oceania case was simply the old case of baptism by a Saracen over again. In the consideration of the Saracen type of case it was naturally assumed by the theologians that if the Saracen had been asked before he baptised whether he believed that baptism had any effect on the soul, he would have replied in the negative. But neither Saracen nor Methodist is necessarily prevented by his false *belief* about the *effects* of the sacrament from *intending* to confer the sacrament. The whole point of a sacrament is that *when it is properly* (form) *and seriously* (intention) *performed*, it works automatically, *ex opere operato*.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Mascall errs in saying that the Holy Office declared the baptisms valid. The point of the Holy Office's reply was that neither in Saracen nor Methodist baptism do false beliefs ground a certain and final presumption of defect of intention. As they obviously do not. The reply of the Holy Office meant, not that all the Oceania baptisms could be considered valid without further inquiry, but rather that they should not all be repeated without further inquiry. Thus the Holy Office stated in a *coda* elucidating its reply that the intellectual errors mentioned "cannot in themselves create such a general presumption against validity . . . as of itself to justify a practical principle of universal application in virtue of which *a priori* [i.e., without further inquiry into what the ministers of the sacrament did in fact *intend*] the baptisms should be repeated."<sup>2</sup> Beliefs and errors belong to the intellect, intention to the will. Surely a Saracen, much more a Methodist, can pour the water intending to perform a Christian rite? Only on the extremely improbable supposition that the frame of mind of the Methodists in question was such that if they had somehow learnt the truth about the sacrament, they would have refused to proceed, would the baptisms have been invalid. But evidence suggesting such an intention would have had to be elicited by inquiry into *intention*; it can not be settled by evidence about beliefs.

<sup>1</sup> Proper dispositions in the recipient are required for the sanctifying grace proper to the sacrament, but not for receiving the character or power bestowed by such sacraments as baptism and orders.

<sup>2</sup> *Collectanea*, S.C.P.F., 1465.

Neither, of course, do false beliefs about the nature of the ministry and the Eucharist ground a presumption of defect of intention to bestow the sacrament of orders. But what they very easily do is to invalidate the *form* of the sacrament by essentially changing its meaning. The Catholic Church could validly use the form, "I make you a presbyter"; in the Church's use of the word "presbyter" would be a transliteration of the Latin word, and so would mean a priest. But used in a Church which chose the word "presbyter" in preference to "priest" precisely to signify the evangelical conception of the ministry, the form would be invalid.

But may not false beliefs about baptism also, then, change the meaning of the word "baptise?" No: while Murray's *New English Dictionary* cites plenty of evidence of the two radically different meanings of "priest," and quotes J. B. Lightfoot as noting that "the word 'priest' has two senses," the word "baptise" has only one meaning in a Christian context: "to apply water as a sign of Christian initiation." Moreover, while the laying on of hands is indeterminate in its symbolism, in baptism the washing symbolises the cleansing from sin (and so, indirectly, regeneration) and the naming indicates the birth of the "new man." Moreover, by no principle of semantics could the rite of baptism (instituted directly by Christ Himself, who also gave it its meaning) be construed as bearing the *opposite* of its true significance. Finally, there is always an extremely strong presumption in favour of the validity of a sacrament in the performance of which the minister has observed with exact fidelity the rite prescribed by Christ and hallowed by the Church's usage.

## II. IDENTIFIABILITY

In his letter, Dr. Mascall proposes the novel doctrine that in sacraments whose forms were not directly instituted by Our Lord, "identifiability" (as this or that sacrament) provides a criterion of the validity of the form. To know whether a rite is valid, he holds, it is sufficient that it be clear whether or not someone is being baptised or ordained or absolved. Dr. Mascall is satisfied if the rite "makes it clear what is being done; for example, that a bishop is being consecrated, and not a baby being baptised or a helicopter being dedicated." It is immediately obvious, first,

that this criterion is extremely vague and, secondly, that it begs or by-passes all the relevant questions.

Dr. Mascall's own interpretation of his principle as applied to the sacrament of orders turns out to be mechanical and external. For him, a rite purporting to be an ordination rite is valid if it is "identifiable" as the bestowal of "a specified one of the three orders of the historic ministry"—however the order or the historic ministry is conceived. "A rite," he insists, "is a means of doing something, not a theological statement of the nature of what is being done"; and he is emphatic that in orders the meaning officially attached to the words priest or bishop (why not elder and overseer?) by the Church using the rite is completely irrelevant.

Dr. Mascall observes that "*in the strict sense* it is only the minister who . . . can have an intention. The rite . . . cannot intend anything; it is not alive." It is true, and it has already been emphasised in *THE MONTH*, that a rite has not an intention. "The intention of the rite" is Anglican terminology. The point is that a rite has a *meaning*—indeed, its power to symbolise or signify is its very essence—and this meaning may be orthodox or unorthodox. Ordination rites may signify either the supernatural powers of the Catholic priest or merely the evangelical conception of the ministry. A rite, says Dr. Mascall again, can "make it clear what is being done." Exactly; either alone or as interpreted by the formularies of the Church using it, the rite can make it clear whether a man is being ordained a Catholic priest or an evangelical minister. What has confused the issue about CSI orders is that the case against their validity has usually been stated in terms of the ambiguous or misleading Anglican phrase, "the intention of the Church." Like the case against the Edwardian Ordinal, the case against CSI orders is (setting aside the question of the quality of the ordainer) based on defect of form. An interpretively evangelical ordination form is an implicit denial—and a denial not just an intention but in the very form—of the sacrificial functions of the priest. Dr. Mascall says that a rite "is not a theological statement"; it is not, of course, a statement of any kind; it is a rite, a religious symbolic rite; but it implies theological statements, and signifies realities describable only in theological statements.

Disallowing any reference to the formularies of particular



Churches—formularies which in fact interpret their ordination forms—Dr. Mascall further urges that in actual fact there is really only the one Church. There is clearly a very important sense in which this is true. But it is not the one Church that determines the meaning of the word “presbyter” in the other Churches; and the all-importance of the (publicly) recognised meaning of a sacramental form derives from the very nature of a sacrament. If a Church whose presbyters are acknowledged elders ordains a presbyter, it ordains, or appoints, an elder. If it were otherwise, the form, “I make you an elder,” being the true equivalent of the *ex hypothesi* valid form, would itself be valid. There is no magic in the words priest and bishop when, by the rejection of the Christian Sacrifice, they are voided of their significance. If two provinces of the Church decided to break away, reform themselves, and have elders and overseers instead of priests and bishops, but one of the two happened to keep the old names, ordinations would be equally invalid in both.

The question under discussion is this: how is the validity of a sacrament decided when the form is not (as in baptism it is) fixed, or specifically instituted, directly by Christ? In these cases the form is settled by the Church. To decide the question of the validity of forms departing from the Church's form, there are two criteria. If the rite as a whole (that is, matter and form together) signifies the grace of the sacrament, it is valid. Secondly, if the new form is an accurate paraphrase or equivalent of the Catholic form, it is, again, valid. For most theologians would agree that while it is sinful to depart from the regular form without grave reason, an extemporised form with substantially the same meaning would be valid. If a priest lost his *Rituale* in the desert, he could give Extreme Unction validly by anointing the senses of the dying person to the accompaniment of extemporised prayers whose essential meaning was equivalent to that of the regular form.

Ordination forms often present specially complex and subtle problems, because not only has the ordination rite historically undergone considerable variation, but the key words themselves have become ambiguous. Since the validity of a given form depends on its meaning, it may be, and often is, necessary to take into account ecclesiastical and theological history, the idiom of



the time and country to which the form belongs, and the doctrine of the ministry taught by the Church using the form. It will be seen that the traditional Catholic criteria of validity give clear guidance and generally enable us to reach intelligible answers. Let us consider some cases of current interest.

Was the Ordinal of 1552 valid or invalid? Certainly invalid, because it was a departure from the accepted and long-established Catholic form in most significant historical circumstances, and the heretical beliefs of the Reformers (unlike those of the Methodist ministers) found expression in a new rite.

Would the amplified Anglican form of 1662 ("Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, etc.") be valid if used in the Catholic Church? Almost certainly.

Would the same form be valid (as a form) in a Church exclusively composed of Anglo-Catholics and officially teaching doctrine of the Mass and the priesthood? Almost certainly, because in that context the meaning of the form would be orthodox, being equivalent in essentials to the Catholic form and truly signifying the grace and power of the priesthood.

Is the same form valid, as a form, in the Church of England today, so that its ordinations would be valid if only its bishops were true bishops? If the Church of England were to commit itself officially to the Catholic doctrine of the Mass and the priesthood, it almost certainly would be. As things are, however, no one knows what the present doctrine of the Church of England is on these matters, and it is not clear where the authority to impose any particular belief on the point resides. If the Anglican Church were officially to teach the Catholic doctrine, it would lose half its members; if it were to define the opposite doctrine, it would lose the other half.

How does Dr. Mascall's criterion acquit itself in problems concerning sacraments other than orders? Let us take the following pair of cases, in which there would be agreement about the solutions, and ask how the solutions are in fact reached. It will be seen that the Catholic criteria are not only relevant, but lead to reasonable solutions, while Dr. Mascall's external and mechanical criterion, while it happens to fit one of the cases, is positively misleading about the other.

If a priest, instead of using the prescribed form, were to say, "As Christ's minister and representative, I forgive you your sins," it would be a valid absolution on Catholic principles. It would also be valid according to Dr. Mascall's criterion—at least if the scene were enacted in a confessional box. Suppose, on the other hand, that a Catholic priest, having lapsed into Protestantism, "absolves" a penitent by the words: "I assure you that your sins are forgiven in virtue of your saving faith." On Catholic principles this form would certainly be invalid; it is not an act of pardon; it is not, indeed, the bestowal of anything; it is simply the expression of an opinion. Dr. Mascall would presumably agree that the form is invalid. But he does not know this by his principle of identifiability (identifiability cannot be a *criterion*); and by the sort of external standards he applies to orders, the sacrament would appear to qualify for validity. The scene presents, after all, a confessional box, a clergyman in surplice, a violet stole, and a devout confession of sins; and even the unsatisfactory form itself is much more like a sacramental absolution than a harvest festival or a motor-bus.

It will be noticed that, although a sacramental form is not, strictly, a "theological statement," the differences between valid and invalid forms are both semantic and theological differences, and this fact confirms the view that relevant analogies to sacramental forms are presented by legal forms, or instruments, and Creeds. Moreover, Dr. Mascall himself makes some theological assumptions. He presumably demands at least that three historic orders be recognised, though Dr. Jalland recognises only two, and that the presbyter be conceived as exclusively entitled to celebrate the Eucharist. But why precisely these requirements, neither less nor more? Surely the questions of the nature of the Eucharist and the essential priestly power are much more important matters?

It is pretty clear how Dr. Mascall's surprising doctrine came to seem plausible even to himself. Still confusing form and intention, he thinks his principle deducible from the Roman decision about the Methodist baptisms in Oceania. He writes: "What the 1872 decision implies is that, once the *identity*<sup>1</sup> of the sacrament is clear, then no error about the nature of the rite . . . can impair its validity." Whether this sentence is

<sup>1</sup> My italics here, as also in quotations on pp. 356-7.

in itself true or not depends on just what is meant. But what is obvious and important is that no inferences whatever about a criterion of validity of *form* can possibly be drawn from the Oceania case, since that case concerned intention and started from the assumption that the form had been rigidly adhered to. Yet Dr. Mascall, confusing the two, proceeds to apply to form the quite different and infinitely slighter requirements really sufficient (as the Oceania case shows) for intention. For what the Oceania case really shows, of course, is that, if the form is kept, intellectual errors do not ground a final presumption of invalidity of intention.

Since the principle of "identifiability" begs all the relevant questions, it is useless as a criterion. Asked how to distinguish between valid and invalid rites, how to recognise a true ordination rite, Dr. Mascall answers in effect: "It is recognised by its recognisability; an ordination rite is identified by its identifiability as an ordination rite." An ecclesiastical student accompanies him to an ordination in South India and, as they view the rite together, asks: "Is this a valid ordination rite?" "Yes, certainly," Dr. Mascall will reply, "if it is clear that the men are being ordained." Yet the questions are many. One asks whether, so far as their forms go, an ordination rite is valid in CSI? in the Methodist Episcopal Church? in the Swedish Lutheran Church? when it uses the word "priest"? "presbyter"? "elder"? "overseer"? when it does not signify the supernatural and invisible powers of the priesthood (which for nearly 2,000 years the sacrament has been understood not only to bestow, but to signify)? when it implicitly excludes these? when there is no physical contact at the laying on of hands? In these and a hundred other cases one can determine whether the ceremony in question is identifiable as an ordination rite only if one knows *beforehand* what are the requirements for a valid form. The Red Queen stamped her foot. "Go into the wood," she said, "and bring me back a Hobbit, or—off with your head!" "But, please, your Majesty, I don't know what a Hobbit is," said Alice timidly. "Then first of all," said the Queen, "you must *identify* it." "But I haven't done Identification yet," said Alice, thinking it was Quadratic Equations. "Why, look for its distinguishing marks, silly!" said the Red Queen more kindly, catching the Dormouse a smart

crack with her flamingo. "Is it clearly marked, then?" asked Alice, her spirits rising again. "Very plainly indeed," said the Queen, spreading her fan: "it is marked exactly like a Hobbit."

## THE STATE OF FRANCE

THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE of Herbert Lüthy's study of contemporary France, as of Jules Romains's less comprehensive but equally revealing document, have been widely recognised. The weakness of both books is a failure to appreciate that the problems of present-day France can be solved only on the spiritual plane.<sup>1</sup>

Both the "economic feudalism" of the "Fourth Republic" (in plainer terms, the selfish and parasitic sectional interests so uncompromisingly defended in petty-bourgeois, small-town France) and the aggressive Marxist materialism of the Communist proletariat are equally manifestations, in social, economic and political terms, of French *laïcisme*. The key to the contemporary French scene is the war *à outrance*, not between capital and labour, but between France Christian and France Pagan. Some prominent Catholics apparently favour a coalition, or popular front, uniting the Catholic Left with the spurious France, the France of the Communist Party and the Masonic lodges; but the betrayal of France Christian could lead only to the triumph of Soviet Communism. No politician or journalist can serve France today without declaring war on *laïcisme*. When M. Lüthy writes: "M. Herriot and M. Cachin, M. Daladier and M. Thorez, never had any difficulty in finding a common language," he is blissfully unaware that this acute comment is also a warning against the efforts now being made to work out a formula to enable Pierre Mendès-France (for him, as for M. Mauriac, the fearless Paladin) to become the Léon Blum of 1956.

In the territories of the French Union (the Empire having been officially "abolished" by the Fourth Republic), the consequences of *laïcisme* are even more glaring than in metropolitan France. As M. Lüthy points out, although "France unquestionably possesses the oldest and greatest colonial tradition of all the European nations," and "it was overseas France that stood the test of war, and provided France

<sup>1</sup> *The State of France*, by H. Lüthy (Secker and Warburg 35s).

*A Frenchman Examines His Conscience*, by J. Romains (André Deutsch 12s 6d).

with territory, an army, and a fleet with which she was able to re-enter the conflict in its final phases," nevertheless "there have been more than a few malicious attacks on, and irritated apologies for, those who held the French Empire together, after the defeat of the home country under the Vichy régime but outside the range of German power." France continues to be the foremost missionary country in the entire world; nor need she be ashamed of the soldiers and administrators who laid the foundations of France overseas. If today the North African crisis has enabled her enemies to indict her before the U.N., the responsibility rests, not with the "imperialists," but with the politicians of the Republic who, traditionally opposed to the empire as such, have tended to regard it as little more than a recrudescence abroad of the detested *ancien régime*.

The North African crisis, like the crisis in Indo-China which preceded it, is compounded of the sabotage of colonial enterprise by the interference of Paris, the corruption of French settlers abroad by the amoral influences of the anti-clerical Republic, the indoctrination in Paris of the native intelligentsia with the inflammatory ideas of 1789, and the absence of any real missionary spirit on the part of the administration. In spite of the admirable efforts of countless individuals, the result has been stagnation and the exportation to North Africa of some of the worst features of metropolitan France. That is why the Arab world, which once had reason to respect and admire French culture and colonial enterprise, is now so easily provoked and incited by Communist agents within the nationalist movements in favour of a holy war for the violent overthrow of French rule.

The discontent in French North Africa is inevitable. It is true that in many of the Arab states native conditions are worse than in the Maghreb; what is most provocative in the North African situation is not merely the contrast with French affluence, but the obvious avoidability of much of the Arab poverty. In Algeria, for example, where, out of a total population of 9,370,000, there are some 800,000 unemployed (in Britain this proportion would mean an unemployment figure of some four and a half million), a considerable proportion of the French settlers are engaged exclusively in the production of wine, for which there is literally no demand, since metropolitan France already produces more than enough to satisfy the needs of Frenchmen both at home and abroad, while the Arab population are forbidden wine by their religion.

Yet so grim is the background to this irresponsibility that on 15 September of this year the Algerian Bishops found it necessary to protest against the advocacy of contraception and abortion as a solution to the poverty of the country. In the past, expediency has devised for the North African economic problem other "solutions" only less unreal-



istic and revolting. Louis Massignon wrote in last August's issue of the Catholic *L'Homme Nouveau*: "I have been informed by a responsible functionary (of the North African administration) that since the conquest of Algeria we have sought to convert the Moslems to wine drinking"—which in their eyes is sin. Presumably the desire to reinforce the temptation explains why the 250 principal *bistrots* in Algeria are also brothels. In metropolitan France houses of prostitution were made illegal by the law of 1946, but in Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco they persist in the form of *bistrot-bousbir*. To perpetuate this state of affairs, when in 1949 the United Nations obtained the agreement of all other member nations to suppress legalised prostitution, the representative of France demanded that an exception be made in the case of North Africa on the ground that the Mohammedan faith made this institution necessary. This was flagrantly untrue; the Koran (XXIV, 33) forbids the hiring out of slaves for such a purpose. Indeed, the testimony of persons connected with this traffic is not admitted in Moslem courts.

Given such an attitude to their responsibilities on the part of the settlers and the politicians of the Fourth Republic, it is not surprising that the prestige of France has fallen both in Algeria and in the Protectorates. Select members, moreover, of the native intelligentsia and the *émigré* proletariat in Paris have been carefully and skilfully trained to exploit the resulting Arab grievances to the utmost. Had the Republic taken seriously its responsibility as moral guardian, protector and educator of the citizens of the French Union, while neither settlers nor administrators would have led blameless lives, their offences against Arab susceptibilities would have been reduced to a minimum. As it is (although M. Lüthy does not appear to think so), the nationalist movements are seriously infiltrated by Communist agents, and North Africa typifies what he so truly describes as "one of the paradoxes of the French Empire"—the fact that "practically all of the anti-colonial movements have their roots in Paris . . . the incubator of all rebellious ideas."

M. Romain, who does not touch on the problems of the French Union, is understandably revolted by the "slums, filth, alcohol, gluttony, laziness and indiscipline" of metropolitan France. But should he be surprised? Does not the individualism natural to the Catholic tradition inevitably degenerate into anarchy and irresponsibility once it is bereft of the restraining discipline of religious practice? Are not "slums, filth, alcohol, gluttony, laziness and indiscipline" inevitable so long as France chooses to live in the never-never twilight of indecision, refusing to submit to the firm yet gentle censure of the Church, yet hoping against hope to escape the ruthless chastisement of the Revolu-



tion? In the Protestant tradition, where cleanliness is next to godliness, and hard work, temperance, thrift and obedience are the traditional characteristics of the Elect, these virtues, and the corresponding vices, are bred without compulsion. Hence the almost pathological British readiness to fill in forms, pay taxes and obey the rules of the parliamentary game. But in an ancient Christian land such as France, whose very sins bear the stamp of Catholic baptism, it is surely too much to hope, as does M. Romain, that the less congenial virtues can be evoked merely by the appeal to reason.

Unlike M. Lüthy, M. Romain does not indicate the saviour on whom he relies to reform the French constitution in accordance with his proposals. But both appear to cherish the fond delusion that the *malaise* of contemporary France, so obviously spiritual in character, may somehow or other be remedied without reference to the cure of souls.

T. E. BUTLER

## JESUITS IN PARAGUAY

THERE ARE SO MANY highly dramatic elements in the story of the Reductions of Paraguay, it is surprising that it has not been exploited before for the theatre. Fritz Hochwalder needed little invention for his drama; history supplied ample material, and he followed the account with reasonable, even remarkable, accuracy. The play (*The Strong are Lonely*) shows the Jesuits to be selfless and kind governors, efficient organisers, shrewd businessmen, loved by the Indians and loyal subjects of the Spanish Crown. In the trial, conducted by the imperial emissary, each charge brought against the Jesuits is not only disposed of, but the virtues of their ingenious state are brought into clear focus. Certain necessary information about the nature and spirit of the Society, as well as its work in Paraguay, is woven into the dialogue as it proceeds to the climax.

As a matter of historical fact, the tragedy of Paraguay arises out of the ruthless crushing of a dream, already half-realised and apparently destined to greater success, by the jealousy and greed of the Society's enemies, abetted by the complaints of the cruel Spanish colonists. This, in fact, is brought out in the play, especially by the almost despair of Father Provincial, convincingly portrayed by Donald Wolfitt. But

Hochwalder goes beyond this situation and tries to give the drama another tragic dimension. In so doing, he mars his work with an unfortunate distortion. In one of the many points of view presented by different characters in the "book," it is suggested that the Jesuits, with all their good intentions, failed to give the natives adequate spiritual food; they provided a material Utopia which the Indians ran to and enjoyed; baptism of the Indians was merely a ticket to a good thing, a full stomach and security. In the first scene the Provincial catechises two chieftains (who represent 7,000 souls) about their motives for coming to the fathers. They come of their own free will, they assert, to adore the God Jesus *who is good*. "You will renounce polygamy," the Provincial asks. In the Oxford production, a meaningful pause followed the question, during which the natives leer at each other, wink and smile and then respond, "For the love of God who is good, we will renounce polygamy." Of course, this play brought loud laughter from the audience, and the impression given was that these were (and would remain) "rice-Christians." This might have been admissible—they were, after all, pre-neophytes, still ignorant of Christianity—but the development of the play confirmed the impression that the reductions were composed of such converts.

The tragedy of the Provincial gradually evolves not around the injustice of the imperial decree, but more around his failure to spread the kingdom of God. Ernest Milton, delightfully detestable as the Jesuit legate in disguise (history attests to the unhappy choice of this man, who treated his religious brethren as rebels and acted without prudence or caution), almost steals the show when he delivers the command and lectures the Provincial on his vow of obedience with an impassioned aloofness worthy of a hangman. Censured by the legate the Provincial calls the two chieftains back again to confirm his suspicions that he is guilty of not establishing the kingdom of God in this world. With a pathetic gesture the Provincial confesses his defeat and dramatically rips the map of Paraguay off the wall, exclaiming "Anti-christ!"

Fortunately, *The Strong Are Lonely* does not impose a thesis on the audience or even attempt to resolve the problem of loyalties or motivations around which the play develops. It moves at a good pace and compels attention until the end, until the moving scene of the Provincial's death-bed, when, though confessing that his heart was with the rebellious Fr. Aros, he proclaims his faith in the work of the Society after the example of Xavier, that the flame which Xavier ignited will continue to burn.

FRANCIS J. SMITH

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## REVIEWS

### AMBIGUOUS EVIDENCE

*Surprising Mystics*, by Herbert Thurston, S.J., edited by J. H. Crehan, S.J. (Burns and Oates 18s).

FR. CREHAN is rendering a notable service to Catholic thought in England by rescuing from the pages of *THE MONTH* or other periodicals a number of Fr. Thurston's invaluable discussions on the abnormal phenomena sometimes associated with high spirituality. The present volume is made up of fourteen studies, and the cases range from the early thirteenth century to the twentieth. The most extensive study is that devoted to Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774-1824), a visionary, ecstatic and stigmatic whose alleged revelations have attracted a good deal of attention. Fr. Thurston's special way of dealing with these is to compare them with those of St. Bridget and Maria de Agreda and to point out the manifold contradictions between these three authorities. He concludes that, since there seems to be little reason for preferring the version of events given by one visionary to those of the others, the historical value of the alleged revelations is "absolutely nil."

On the other hand he emphasises a strong element of unexplained topographical accuracy in Sister Emmerich's revelations. This element he takes as on the same footing as the communications received through spiritualistic mediums or by automatic writing. As regards the stigmata, it is of peculiar interest that he felt compelled to accept the evidence for the stigmatisation of "Georges Marasco," a "hysterical subject in whom there was probably found a doubling of personality, analogous to that outlined in R. L. Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*"; to which case we may add the two modern male stigmatics, both apparently non-Catholics, described in an all too brief appendix which the editor contributes. When we add that molestations like those of St. John Baptist Vianney's "Grappin" find a close parallel in poltergeist phenomena, and other "mystical" phenomena in the contortionism of a medium such as Home, the evidential value of almost all such types of phenomena seems to be remarkably reduced. It may be remembered that Fr. Thurston thought it possible that Home's power of self-levitation was genuine; and the evidence for imperviousness to fire ranges from Home himself to the inhabitants of Fiji, Southern India, Trinidad and elsewhere, and appears to be beyond controversy.

It is unfortunate that till modern times all such phenomena were regarded as either fabricated or else of divine or diabolic origin.

Modern scientific study of the evidence and of allied phenomena in morbid psychology, while it may not have proved very successful in providing naturalistic explanations for some kinds of phenomena, makes us less willing to exclude the possibility of such explanation. In particular, it is interesting that the subjects of such experiences often prove to have suffered some kind of psychological shock or traumatic lesion before the phenomena begin to appear, and the possibility cannot be disregarded that "mystical phenomena" reflect both the reality of the spiritual life of their subjects and also the toll that it takes of their physical well-being; is it an accident that there are, I take it, many more female than male stigmatics? Incidentally, modern study should warn us against too much scepticism as to the phenomena alleged in the lives of various saints and mystics of past times. Fr. Thurston shows, indeed, that not infrequently a mass of legend comes to incrustate the core of truth in traditions of sanctity; but the core of truth is often there, underneath the legendary element.

It is also unfortunate that the teaching of St. John of the Cross and of other spiritual masters, on the need for the subject to disregard *all* such phenomena in the approach to God, has so often been unknown and neglected, and that too often directors of conscience have given way to the temptation of curiosity. Where these things are regarded with admiration and the sort of curiosity which attaches to a spiritualistic seance, it is only too likely that an atmosphere will be created in which, not to speak of deliberate fraud, subconscious motivation will engender a supply of the phenomena.

Fr. Crehan's additions to the text, apart from the short appendix mentioned above, are restricted to initialled footnotes. These are often of great value and are evidence of the extreme and laborious care with which he has carried out his editorial function. A good example of his work is the extended note on stigmatisation (pp. 193 f.), which includes some references to literature that has appeared since Fr. Thurston's death. The book has a useful index, in which however I looked in vain for a list of references to levitation.

B. C. BUTLER

#### COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

*William Weston: The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, translated from the Latin by Philip Caraman, with a Foreword by Evelyn Waugh (Longmans 18s).

IT IS OFTEN ASSUMED that the Elizabethans were people very like ourselves. But this is not so. And one has only to read the autobiography of a man such as William Weston to see how strangely unfamiliar is the landscape of sixteenth-century England. For what

this story reveals is not the traditionally bland and prosperous picture of the age of Gloriana, but a glimpse of that other shadowy world that was also part of it, the world of the Catholic underground. William Weston is the second Jesuit missionary whose memoirs Fr. Caraman has edited, and though, in character, he bore little resemblance to John Gerard, the two books ought nevertheless to be read together, for the career of one priest offers both a contrast and a parallel to the fortunes of the other. William Weston was born in 1550, and beyond the fact that he was a student of Christ Church, Oxford, and later became a member of Lincoln's Inn, of his early life almost nothing is known. He went abroad, he became a priest, and, in 1584, a zealous young man and full of hope, he embarked on the perilous English mission.

When he returned, twenty years later, to Spain, broken in health after seventeen years' imprisonment, the world of free men must have seemed to him as strange a place as it did to Rip van Winkle. It cannot be denied that the first impression one has of his character is not wholly encouraging, and that when compared with the bustling, adventurous Gerard, Weston, with his exorcisms and credulity, his reticences and lack of humour, seems stiff and dated indeed.

But though Weston may have lacked something of his fellow-Jesuit's resourceful charm, he was undoubtedly his superior in some other respects. For it was not the qualities of a good company-commander that he was called upon to display, but of a commander-in-chief, and that he possessed the judgment and authority so vital to one in that position is made clear in the autobiography. It was he who presided over that all-important meeting at Hoxton in 1585 at which it was decided that the priests on the English mission should not seek shelter from the laity unless it was freely offered. And in the following year, when the laity had already proved themselves equal to the challenge, it was again Weston who in a last hurried meeting with Southwell and Garnet, his successor as Superior of the Mission, drew up the plans for the effective organisation of the Catholic resistance in every part of England. With Fr. Weston's arrest his active life as a missionary priest came to an end, but even in prison the echoes of great events seem to have pursued him, so that one is left with the uneasy feeling that it would be easier to discover the truth about the Wisbech stir and the Babington conspiracy if only he had written more freely. Perhaps he would have done so had he been more interested in argument and politics, but these were subjects that he tried, whenever possible, to avoid.

It was the bewildered ideological victims of the age who appealed most strongly to Weston's pity and wonder, and when he describes

the torments of conscience suffered by those who had abandoned the faith and relates how devils have been seen gliding like fishes under the skins of men, one gains a sudden insight into the mind of the sixteenth century. Fr. Caraman is to be congratulated on the rare suppleness and vitality of his translation, but his notes cover such controversial ground that one could wish that they were fuller. Among them, however, there is one that could not be bettered, and that is the spy's unforgettable description of the Jesuit. It was June, and he wore, wrote Mr. Tyrrell, "a doublet and hose of yellow canvas lined with black." "A tall, dark man," added another witness, "with a downward look."

CHRISTIAN HESKETH

### GRACE AND NATURE IN SHAKESPEARE

*Nature in Shakespearian Tragedy*, by Robert Speaight (Hollis and Carter 15s).

*The Slave of Life*, by M. D. H. Parker (Chatto and Windus, 18s).

*The Mutual Flame*, by G. Wilson Knight (Methuen 18s).

THE FIRST TWO of these books both hinge on that period—about 1600 if it must be dated—when Shakespeare's interest turned from comedy and chronicle to tragedy. Mr. Speaight sees it as the moment when Shakespeare, who had previously celebrated harmony with nature as the secret of successful living, "became fascinated by the failure of the natural man and the falsity of the natural woman." Miss Parker starts further back; in a careful comparative study of the histories and comedies she traces the difference between the neo-pagan morality that was gaining ground under cover of conventional piety and the older orthodox standards which Shakespeare quite definitely but rather too lightly took for granted; a pointed instance is his acceptance of Christian mercy, which is God's example to man, as opposed to Senecan *clementia* based on expediency. But Miss Parker comes to the same moment as Mr. Speaight: when Shakespeare found that his Christian framework "must face the utmost and inmost evil that imagination could consistently devise." Both books thus bring us up against something now recognised as inescapable: the stench of corrupting humanity that obsesses the crescendo of plays in 1601-3, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Hamlet*. In the plays that follow, both books are similarly concerned with Shakespeare's reply to the prevalence of evil; but they proceed along divergent, though perhaps complementary, lines.

Mr. Speaight traces the descent of human nature through being merely natural to becoming *unnatural* and deformed; he then uncovers

the Shakespearian symbolism which restores human nature to its original harmony by *supernatural* (or perhaps only preternatural?) remedies. Anxious to avoid what he calls "the abstractions of dogma," Mr. Speaight tries not to go outside the immediate impressions imposed on him by seeing the plays in action. In this he is greatly aided by his wide experience of the theatre and by a graceful, polished style which makes consistently pleasant reading. From vivid impressions, however, he passes inevitably to emotive reflections. Here his determination not to discover in Shakespeare "the abstractions of dogma," or any definite set of beliefs, is somewhat confused by his habit of finding in the plays such ideas as "incarnation," "plenary pardon," "the resurrection of the flesh" and "the Beatific Vision." The meaning Mr. Speaight attaches to these doctrinal terms is obscure; yet it is undoubtedly true that some of the later plays are soaked in religious imagery of a serious import. We cannot assume that Shakespeare was incapable of clear conceptual thought on these subjects. During this later period acceptance of Christianity, whether Anglican, Catholic or Puritan, had become strictly theological. Hence a dilemma arises. Either Shakespeare believed in the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting as taught by the Church, or else he made (from a Christian point of view) a blasphemous use of them to enhance merely natural affections.

Dr. Wilson Knight, author of the third book on this list, would be in favour of the latter alternative—not that he regards Shakespeare as blasphemous. His view, or the view that he attributes to Shakespeare, is that human love carries divine grace within it of its own right and that the true meaning of religious imagery is only seen in the development of human nature towards a state of bi-sexual completion. *The Mutual Flame* is concerned with the Sonnets and with *The Phoenix and the Turtle*; but the author has little of specific interest to say about either, and this book adds nothing to his earlier and much more brilliant Shakespearian speculations—to which, incidentally, both Miss Parker and Mr. Speaight are indebted.

Miss Parker favours the former alternative and goes far to demonstrate it. Her conclusion is that Shakespeare's fundamental assumptions though veiled by convention and expediency, are consciously and personally Catholic. It is a notable achievement even if it sometimes gives the impression of being the work-book for a larger study. Her appendix on the *external* evidence for Shakespeare's religious sympathies is much to the point; but it is unfortunate that the authority she chiefly relies on (*Shakespeare and Catholicism* by H. Mutschmann and K. Wentersdorf) contains a paucity of references, some grave historical distortions and several errors of fact.



The conviction common to these three books of the inner radiance of Shakespeare's final vision, though long shared by Dr. Wilson Knight and Mr. Speaight (along with Mr. Derek Traversi), is in interesting contrast with the prevalent mood of twenty or thirty years ago.

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

## SHORTER NOTICES

*The Wind Bloweth Where It Listeth*, by Paul-André Lesort, translated by Antonia White (Collins 12s 6d).

THIS IS SO thoroughly French a book that we would have thought that those able to savour it would not have needed a translation. It falls really into two parts—the life of Yves Neuville and his wife Françoise during the decade preceding the last war, and that of Yves at the front. The horrible period of "Munich" makes a bridge between the two. M. Lesort is very clear about the pre-war unpreparedness of France for any war, but perhaps he is not as clear about that of England, and our utter bewilderment when war was declared. Yves is unbaptised but, in his way, a mystic. The winds of God disturb the sooty clouds that weigh on him. His wife is baptised and has made her first Communion, but her faith has faded out—her religion, we think, had been based only on the Catechism and depressed by the aftermath of Jansenism. The first part is not too long if we accept the French self-consciousness and readiness for self-analysis (though we might not expect anything quite so developed and *vocal* in poor working-people), and M. Lesort's loving intelligence of small children is delightful. But tragic is his picture of the spiritual and intellectual disarray of France due not even chiefly to disillusionment after the first war, not even to the unashamed trickeries of politicians and soulless financiers, but to the long-drawn effort to de-Christianise the people and the inadequacy of the Catholic apostolate, however virtuous the clergy. For English readers, the story of Yves in the first part of the war, his imprisonment, conversion and death will be more intelligible than the long discussions about happiness and the nature of married love (meaning a *perfect* union) in the first chapters, but they throw light on the end and the anguish of Françoise when she realises that Yves, having now the Faith, has something that she has not. It is worth entering into the sorrow of the *un*-converted when the sword of Faith seems to have cleft deep into the union of hearts and minds, as well as the anguish of the convert which may continue even within the joy that has been given him. There are pages which fully justify M. Lesort's being given the "Grand Prix de la Littérature Catholique": he sees the



horribleness of modern life as clearly as M. Mauriac does but has none of his gloom. We hope Miss White will continue her most sensitive translations, but we suggest that French "uneducated" talk *can't* find an English equivalent. Having been introduced so perfectly into a French environment and mentality, we suffer a shock when she makes a French soldier talk a sort of Cockney and, *e.g.*, drop his h's. Slang may find an equivalent, but not mispronunciation. French, of course, can reproduce varieties of French "accents"; but it would be no good translating "Marseillais" into, *e.g.*, "Devonshire," or making an Ardècheois talk Yorkshire.

*Up the Green River*, by Thomas Gilby (Eyre and Spottiswoode 15s).

THE AUTHOR tells us, in a pleasing double negative, that "this story is not entirely unfounded on fact." So fascinating are its imbrolios that we are convinced that both negatives should be eliminated. For Richard, a priest in the Black Country, has decided to lead a score or two of the victims of industrialism to South America where (between two "States") he would found a colony fit for the Independent, and, in fact, he did so. The author gets into the skin of his characters, and also admirably portrays members of the British Navy, Counts of most ancient distinction, Irish sergeant-majors, Franciscan priests, and notably the one-eyed, ex-free-fighter named with charming irony Brother Modestino: and (since we cannot possibly omit him) the magnificent super-bull, Spilsby Hero, so gentle to the touch of the half-wit giant Aloysius, yet whose furious vengeful onslaught on the abominable Dominador solved an appalling situation. Long years later, his memory survived in the pleasure-park Spilbiero. Fighting by land and sea; romance, and indeed a riot of marriages; sorrows, comedy not farcical (though the happy ending is something of a romp); not a little political wisdom; humour, kindly at its most sardonic; joyousness overcoming the macabre; and a story rapidly told, swinging full circle back to England without disillusionment. A perfectly period book with nothing that the most modern cannot understand and enjoy.

*Seeing the Faith*, edited by F. O. Edwards, S.J. (Burns and Oates 21s).

THIS BOOK is a practical, enlightened and at times entertaining guide to the making of models, movable picture diagrams, peep-shows maps, charts, dioramas, electrical devices and even games which "can be 'baptised' and pressed into the service of the Church." The writers whose expressed aim was "to provide a constructional handbook" have, in fact, achieved much more than that, since the text, far from presenting the stereotyped expressions of the professional handbook is vivid and

spontaneous. The young craftsman is not left wondering where to look for the simple and inexpensive materials required.

The principle underlying the use of these excellent models, which serve to stimulate not merely the visual but also the kinaesthetic and other senses, is based on St. Thomas's idea that there is nothing in the human intellect which was not first in the senses. As the authors point out, a mystery can never be explained but "an illustration in the material order can help us to understand what we believe . . . and enable the youthful memory to grapple with the abstract."

The text is very well illustrated with five photographs and thirty-five line drawings which merit high praise for the clarity, accuracy and beauty of their execution.

*Selections from Samuel Johnson*, edited by R. W. Chapman (Oxford University Press 1958).

JOHNSON must be one of the best known of English characters as he is one of the greatest. Yet, if few people have read Boswell's *Life*, how many have read Johnson's own writings? The Johnson we know is the Johnson of legend: coarse, eccentric, dogmatic and verbose. Yet this is a distorted image of the real man for he was also kindly, devout, affectionate and humble.

This very excellent anthology admirably redresses the balance between these two viewpoints. Popular opinion is supported by examples of Johnson's most famous dicta quoted from Boswell's *Life*, but those who love the man, and he is eminently lovable, will value the judicious selection from his poetry, moral essays, biographies, political pamphlets, parliamentary reports, prayers, letters and his book of travels. Finally there is his will, the mirror of his uneasy piety and his simplicity and generosity of heart.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*The Editor, THE MONTH.*

DEAR SIR,

In the course of a generous review of my biographical dictionary, *English Medieval Architects*, in your issue for August, your reviewer states that it contains some 1,300 names of "designers who flourished from the beginning of the fourteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century."

May I point out that a substantial number of the careers given are of men who flourished before A.D. 1300? Of the total of 1,300, in round figures, 250 are of earlier date: of these some 170 were of the thirteenth century, and 80 from Saxon times up to 1200.

Yours faithfully,

6th October 1955

JOHN H. HARVEY.

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